DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 462 346 SO 033 586

AUTHOR	Perry, Douglas
TITLE	The Civil War as Photographed by Mathew Brady. The Constitution Community: Civil War and Reconstruction (1850-1870).
INSTITUTION	National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	2001-00-00
NOTE	25p.; For related lesson plans, see ED 461 604-607 and ED 461 609-615. Photographic images may not reproduce clearly.
AVAILABLE FROM	National Archives and Records Administration, 700 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20408. Tel: 866-325-7208 (Toll Free); e-mail: inquire@nara.gov. For full text: http://www.nara.gov/education/cc/main.html.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom - Teacher (052)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Civil War (United States); *Government Role; *Photographs; Photography; *Primary Sources; Secondary Education; Slavery; Social Studies
IDENTIFIERS	Articles of Confederation; Brady (Mathew); National Civics and Government Standards; National History Standards; *United States Constitution

ABSTRACT

Many historians call the Civil War the central event in U.S. history. The formation of the U.S. Constitution corrected the autonomy of individual states that the Articles of Confederation did not harness. The young country struggled for 75 years to find a graceful balance between the power of the federal government and that of the states. The states rights and the slavery issue propelled the country into civil war. Mathew Brady and his colleagues used a new medium, photography, to document battlefields, camps, towns, and people touched by the War. No battles were photographed because the still primitive technology of photography required that subjects be still at the moment the camera's shutter snapped. This lesson examines how the Civil War threatened the very purpose of the U.S. Constitution as stated in the Preamble. The lesson correlates to the National History Standards and to the National Standards for Civics and Government. It uses 16 Mathew Brady photographs taken during the Civil War as the primary sources. The lesson provides historical background on the sociology of the Civil War, photography, and lists four resources. It offers instruction for implementing six diverse teaching activities, such as document analysis, a reading assignment and discussion, a writing assignment, research on other Civil War photographs, and an extension activity. (Contains a photograph analysis worksheet.) (BT)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 462 346

National Archives and Records Administration

THE CONSTITUTION COMMUNITY

Civil War and Reconstruction (1850-1870)

The Civil War as Photographed by Mathew Brady

By Douglas Perry

SO 033 586

National Archives and Records Administration
700 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20408
1-866-325-7208

http://www.nara.gov/education/classrm.html

2001

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

The Constitution Community is a partnership between classroom teachers and education specialists from the National Archives and Records Administration. We are developing lessons and activities that address constitutional issues, correlate to national academic standards, and encourage the analysis of primary source documents. The lessons that have been developed are arranged according to historical era.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The Civil War as Photographed by Mathew Brady

Constitutional Connection

This lesson illustrates how the Civil War threatened the very purpose of the Constitution as stated in the Preamble .

This lesson correlates to the National History Standards.

Era 5 -Civil War and Reconstruction (1850-1877)

- **Standard 2B** -Demonstrate understanding of the social experience of the war on the battlefield and homefront.

This lesson correlates to the National Standards for Civics and Government.

Standard III.A.1 -Explain how the U. S. Constitution grants and distributes power to national and state government and how it seeks to prevent the abuse of power.

Cross-curricular Connections

Share these activities with your history, American studies, and language arts colleagues.

List of Documents

1. Colors of the 23rd New York Infantry .

2. Wilderness, near Chancellorsville, VA.

3. View in Wilderness area of VA .

4. Pontoon across the Rappahannock River, VA, Cavalry column .

5. Battery in action at Fredericksburg, VA .

6. Wounded soldiers under trees, Marye's Heights, Fredericksburg, after the battle of Spotsylvania, 1864 .

7. Wounded soldiers in hospital .

8. Confederate prisoners waiting for transportation, Belle Plain, VA .

9. A company of the 6th Maine Infantry on parade after the battle of Fredericksburg. At time of the charge across the stone wall at foot of Marye's Heights, General Joseph Hooker was in command of the Federals and General Fitzhugh Lee in command of the Confederates .

10. Confederate dead behind a stone wall at Fredericksburg, VA. The 6th. Maine Infantry penetrated the Confederate lines at this point .

11. Aquia Creek and the Fredericksburg Railroad, with a construction corps at work .

12. Battery D, 2nd U. S. Artillery, at Fredericksburg, VA .

13. Pontoon bridge across the Rappahannock River at Fredericksburg, VA .

14. An interior view of Union breastworks on Little Round Top, Gettysburg, PA .

15. Camp of the 44th New York Infantry near Alexandria, VA .

16. Camp scene showing winter huts and corduroy roads .

Historical Background

Many historians call the Civil War the central event in U.S. history. The formation of the Constitution corrected the autonomy of individual states that the Articles of Confederation did not harness. Still, the young country struggled for 75 years to find a graceful balance between the power of the federal government and the several states. The rights of states and the issue of slavery propelled the country into civil war. Today, America defines itself from that point forward, as it still seeks a more perfect union and equality for all its citizens.

The sociology of the American Civil War can be viewed through a medium that was coming of age in the middle of the 19th century: photography. The National Archives and Records Administration makes available on-line over 6,000 digitized images from the Civil War. Mathew Brady and his associates, most notably Alexander Gardner, George Barnard, and Timothy O'Sullivan, photographed many battlefields, camps, towns, and

people touched by the war. Their images depict the multiple aspects of the war except one crucial element: battle. Photographs show camp life, routines, war preparations, the moments just prior to battle, and the aftermath of battle. The primitive technology of photography required that subjects be still at the moment the camera's shutter snapped. Battle scenes are, therefore, missing from the record of history of this era. The study of war journals and artifacts has developed a network of people, particularly located on the East Coast, who perform Civil War re-enactments. Recently, these groups have helped American filmmakers portray the war in realistic terms in movies like *Gettysburg* and *Glory* and in other documentaries on key Civil War battles. Thus, the more modern technology of cinematography fills the gap left by photography in recording the battles.

Resources

The Library of Congress has over 1,000 photographs of the Civil War in its American Memory collection. It includes a search engine (http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/cwphome.html).

McPherson, James. *For Cause and Comrade: Why Men Fought in the Civil War* . New York: Oxford University Press, 1997. (McPherson read over 1,000 letters and 200 diaries of Confederate and Union soldiers to come up with his answers to the book's title question.)

McPherson, James. *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* . New York: Oxford University Press, 1988. (This is McPherson's Pulitzer prize-winning history of the Civil War.)

The Valley of the Shadow: Two Communities in the American Civil War by historian Edward L. Ayers of the University of Virginia allows students to compare and contrast a Northern town with a Southern one before, during, and after the Civil War. (http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/vshadow2/index.html) .

Teaching Activities

Document Analysis

1. Provide students with historical background on the Civil War era from textbooks, encyclopedias, or supplemental material. Assign at least two photographs for each student to analyze using the Photograph Analysis Worksheet . Next, place students into groups of four. Arrange them in groups so that two students in each group will have analyzed the same photograph. Direct students to compare and contrast their findings and analyses of the photographs. Once they are familiar with the photographs of the group, ask them to compile a list of adjectives that they think describe the life of a soldier during the Civil War.

Class Discussion

2. Around the perimeter of the classroom, place the words that describe the life of a soldier during the Civil War. Intersperse among these words copies of the 16 photographs. As the students visit the in-class gallery, guide them in composing some thought-provoking questions for discussion: What motivated these men to put up with such difficult circumstances? If there had been television, would the Civil War have ended in 1862? How did soldiers cope with the death of their friends and fellow soldiers? Lead a class discussion using the questions posed by students. A particularly helpful book as a resource for both teacher and student is James McPherson's *For Cause and Comrade* . (See list of resources.)

Reading Assignment and Discussion

3. Keep the photos and word lists posted in the classroom while students discuss their questions and read literature from the Civil War era. Ask students whether the posted photographs are similar to or different from the images described in the literature they read.

Writing Assignment

4. Ask students to select one of the posted photographs and complete one of the following four writing assignments based on one of the pictured individuals.

A. Compose an imaginary journal for a Confederate or Union soldier.
B. Compose an imaginary letter that a Confederate or Union soldier would send home to family or to the local newspaper.
C. Compose for a Confederate or Union soldier a fictional obituary that will appear in his hometown newspaper.
D. Compose a free-verse poem. Giving students 150-200 lines of poetry from Walt Whitman can provide some simple modeling for their verses.

Research

5. Direct students to the NAIL database to find other photographs that show additional aspects of war life for "Johnny Reb" or "Billy Yank." Ask them to print out these photos and add them to the classroom gallery. http://www.nara.gov/nara/nail.html

Extension Activity

6. For classes reading Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage* while studying the Civil War, discuss with students the realism of photography as practiced by Mathew Brady and other photographers with the naturalism of Stephen Crane.

The documents included in this project are from Record Group 111, Records of the Office of the Chief Signal Officer. They are available online through the National

Archives Information Locator (NAIL) database http://www.nara.gov/nara/nail.html, control numbers
NWDNS-111-B-5417
NWDNS-111-B-29
NWDNS-111-B-5085
NWDNS-111-B-508
NWDNS-111-B-314
NWDNS-111-B-349
NWDNS-111-B-286
NWDNS-111-B-404
NWDNS-111-B-168
NWDNS-111-B-514
NWDNS-111-B-4877
NWDNS-165-SB-31
NWDNS-165-SB-32
NWDNS-111-B-6357
NWDNS-111-B-145
NWDNS-111-B-223.
NAIL is a searchable database that contains information about a wide variety of NARA holdings across the country. You can use NAIL to search record descriptions by keywords or topics and retrieve digital copies of selected textual documents, photographs, maps, and sound recordings related to thousands of topics.

This article was written by Douglas Perry, a teacher at Gig Harbor High School in Gig Harbor, WA.

National Archives and Records Administration

Photograph Analysis Worksheet

Step 1. Observation

A. Study the photograph for 2 minutes. Form an overall impression of the photograph and then examine individual items. Next, divide the photo into quadrants and study each section to see what new details become visible.

B. Use the chart below to list people, objects, and activities in the photograph.

PEOPLE	OBJECTS	ACTIVITIES

Step 2. Inference

Based on what you have observed above, list three things you might infer from this photograph.

_____

_____

_____

Step 3. Questions

A. What questions does this photograph raise in your mind?

_____

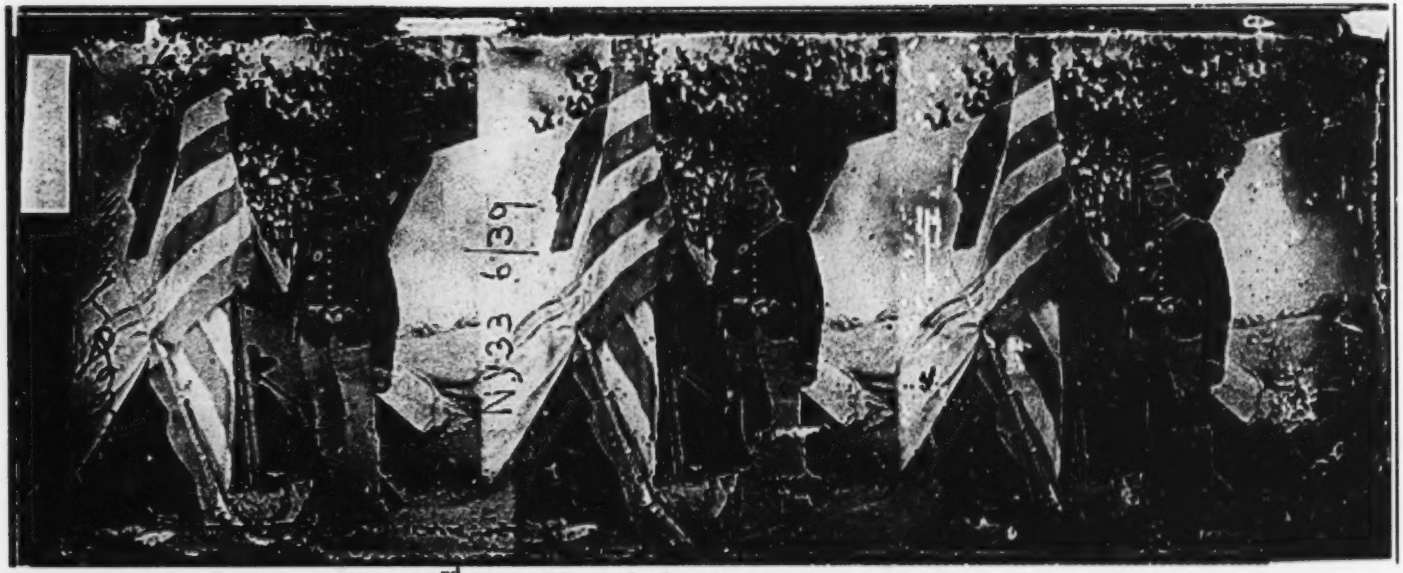
_____

B. Where could you find answers to them?

_____

_____

Designed and developed by the
Education Staff, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408.



Document 1: Colors of the 23rd New York Infantry

Document 2: Wilderness near Chancellorsville, Virginia

Document 3: View in Wilderness area of Virginia.

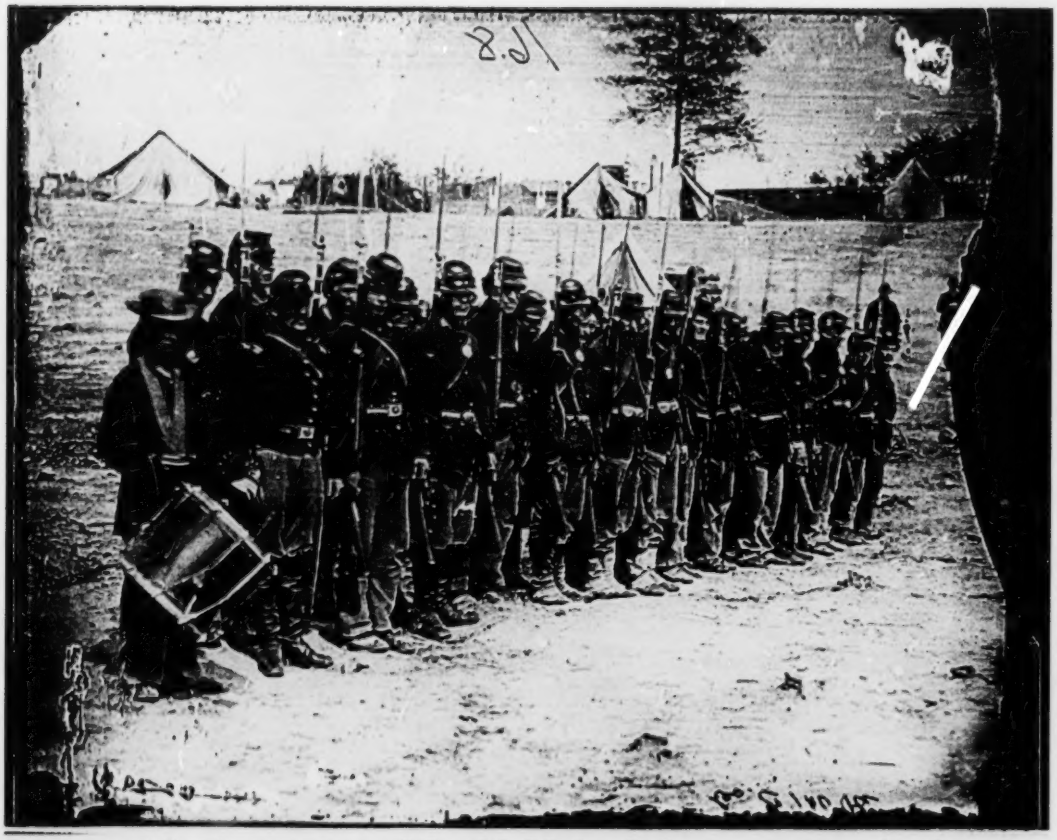
Document 4: Pontoon across the Rappahannock River, Virginia, Cavalry column

Document 5: Battery in action at Fredericksburg, Virginia

Document 6: Wounded soldiers under trees, Marye's Heights, Fredericksburg, Virginia, after the battle of Spotsylvania, 1864

Document 7: Wounded soldiers in hospital

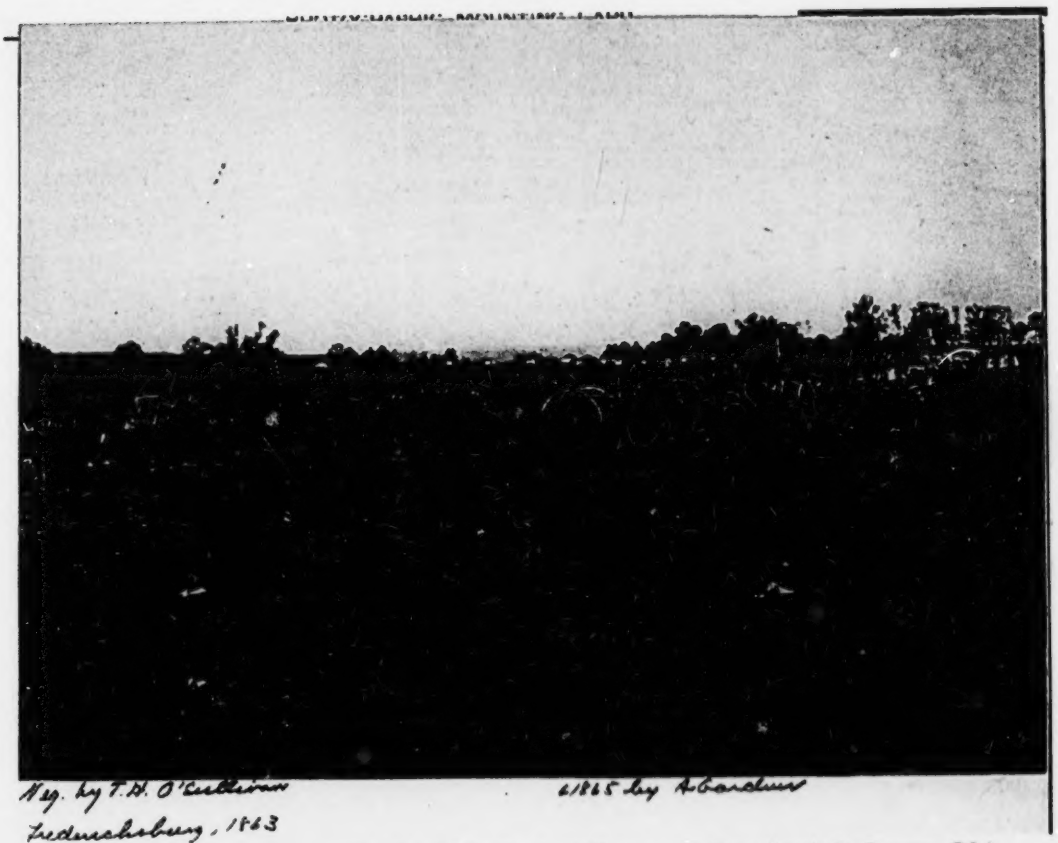
Document 8: Confederate prisoners waiting fro transportation, Belle Plain, Virginia



Document 9: A company of the 6th Maine Infantry on parade after the battle of Fredericksburg. At time of the charge across the stone wall at foot of Marye's Heights, General Joseph Hooker was in command of the Federals and General Fitzhugh Lee in command of the Confederates .

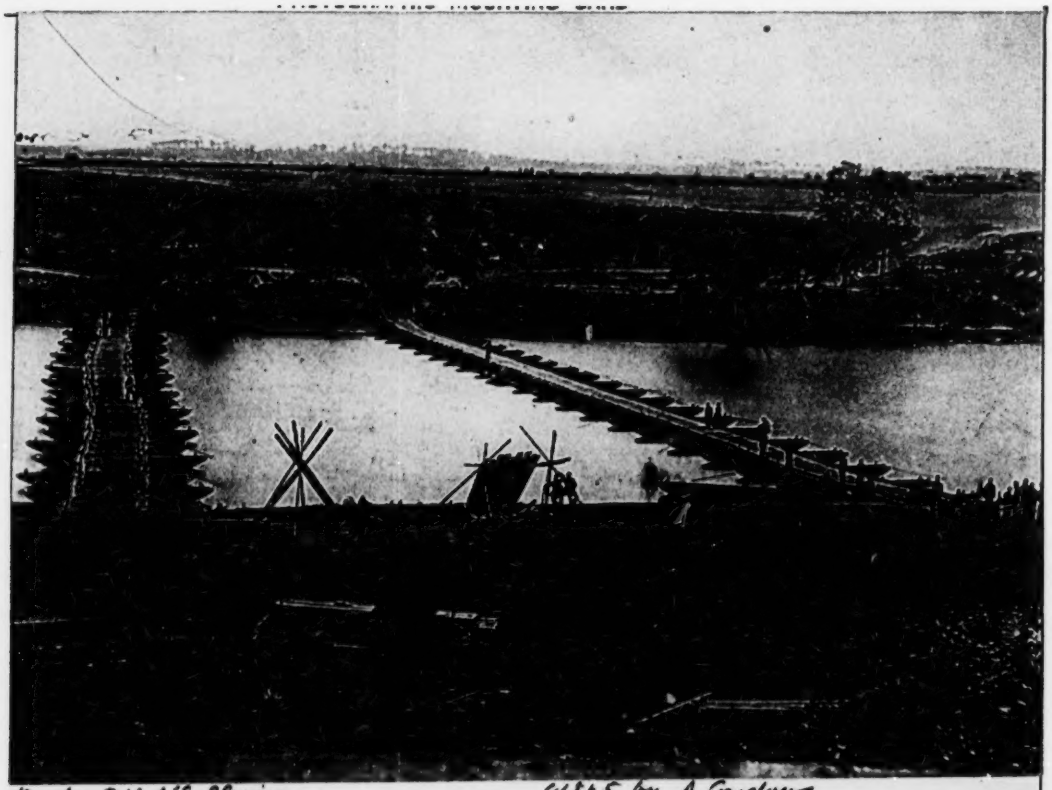
Document 10: Confederate dead behind a stone wall at Fredericksburg, VA. The 6th. Maine Infantry penetrated the Confederate lines at this point

Document 11: Aquia Creek and the Fredericksburg Railroad, with a construction corps at work .



Document 12: Battery D, 2nd U. S. Artillery, at Fredericksburg, VA .

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

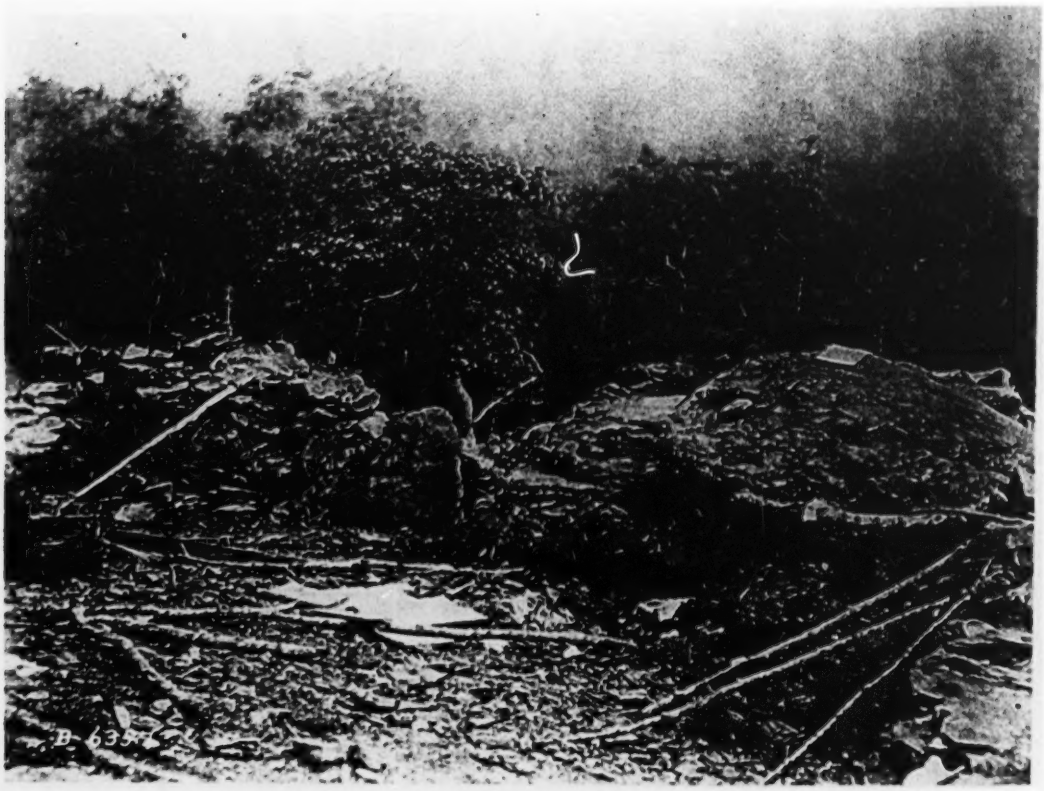


Neg by T. H. O'Sullivan
May 1863

©1865 by A. Gardner

Document 13: Pontoon bridge across the Rappahannock River at Fredericksburg, VA .

BEST COPY AVAILABLE



Document 14: An interior view of Union breastworks on Little Round Top, Gettysburg, PA .

Document 15: Camp of the 44th New York Infantry near Alexandria, VA

Document 16: Camp scene showing winter huts and corduroy roads.